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Co-Operative Union Ltd.

All co-operative societies  
should join the...

Manchester

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*Co-operative union  
tracts*

# ALL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES SHOULD JOIN THE CO-OPERATIVE UNION.



## What is the Co-operative Union ?

1. It is a federation of most of the Co-operative Societies of the United Kingdom, joined together for the purposes of propagandist and defensive action.

2. It is charged with the duty of keeping alive and diffusing a knowledge of the principles which form the life of the Co-operative movement, and giving to its active members, by advice and instruction—literary, legal, or commercial—the help they may require, that they may be better able to discharge the important work they have to do.

3. The Union watches over the interests of Co-operative Societies generally, and employs its propagandist agents in districts where co-operation is unknown.

4. The services of Solicitors are retained by the Union for the purpose of giving legal advice to those Societies whose circumstances require it.

5. Small and struggling Societies are helped and advised by the Members of the Board and the Officers of the Union.

6. The Union is governed by a Central and United Board, in connection with which are several special Committees organised for special work, viz. :—

- (a) An Educational Committee, whose work is to organise Co-operative Education.

- (b) A Committee on Production, to promote Co-operative Production.
- (c) A Joint Parliamentary Committee, to look after the interests of Co-operative Societies so far as they may be affected by Parliamentary action.
- (d) A Joint Propaganda Committee, whose special function is to work with the Wholesale Societies in forming Co-operative Societies under a "Special Propaganda Scheme."
- (e) A Joint Committee, acting with the Trade Union Parliamentary Committee, for the purpose of settling disputes in connection with Co-operative employment.
- (f) An International and Foreign Inquiry Committee, to open up communication with the co-operators of other countries, and to obtain information regarding the development of the Co-operative movement in other parts of the world.

### What has it done?

The greater part of the legal advantages which are now enjoyed by Co-operators originated in the action of the Central Board of the Union, and the Central Committee which it succeeded. They may be summarised as follows:—

1. The right of Co-operative Societies to deal with the public in addition to their own members only.
2. The incorporation of the Societies, by which they have acquired the right of holding in their own name lands or buildings and property generally, and of suing and being sued in their own names, instead of being compelled to employ trustees.
3. The power to hold £200 instead of £100 by individual members of our Societies.
4. The limitation of the liability of members for the debts of the Society to the sum unpaid upon the shares standing to their credit.

5. The exemption of Societies from charge to income tax on the profits of their business, under the condition that the number of their shares shall not be limited.

6. The authorising one Registered Society to hold shares in its own corporate name to any amount in the capital of another Registered Society.

7. The extension of the power of members of Societies to bequeath shares by nomination in a book, without the formality of a will or the necessity of appointing executors, first from £30 to £50, and now to £100, by the Provident Nominations and Small Intestacies Act, 1883, and subsequently by the Industrial and Provident Societies Act of 1893, which also makes this power apply to loans and deposits as well as to shares.

8. The Industrial and Provident Societies Act, 1871, which enabled Societies to hold and deal with land freely.

9. The Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, 1876 and 1893, which consolidated into one Act the laws relating to these Societies, and, among many smaller advantages too numerous to mention in detail, gave them the right of carrying on banking business whenever they offer to the depositors the security of transferable share capital.

### Conditions of Membership.

No Society is admitted into the Union unless its management is of a representative character, nor unless it agree—

1. To accept the statement of principles in the rules of the Union as the rules by which it shall be guided in all its own business transactions.
2. To contribute to the fund of the Union the annual payment following:—
  - (a) If the number of members of any such Society is less than 1,000, then the sum of 2d. for each member.
  - (b) If the number of such members exceeds 1,000, then, at least, the sum of 2,000d.

The funds of the Co-operative Union are raised by subscriptions from the Societies which become joined to it. The subscription is fixed by rule at the rate of 2d. per member per annum.

The Union has now (the year 1901) **1,095** Societies included in its membership, and these Societies have **1,523,030** members.

The Societies which remain outside the Union number **556**, and have **206,946** members.

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The CENTRAL OFFICES of the Union are at

**Long Millgate, Manchester;**

And there are BRANCH OFFICES at

50, CLARENCE STREET, GLASGOW;

99, LEMAN STREET, LONDON;

AND

Imperial Buildings, Westgate Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne.



Co-operative Printing Society Limited, 118, Corporation Street, Manchester.

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